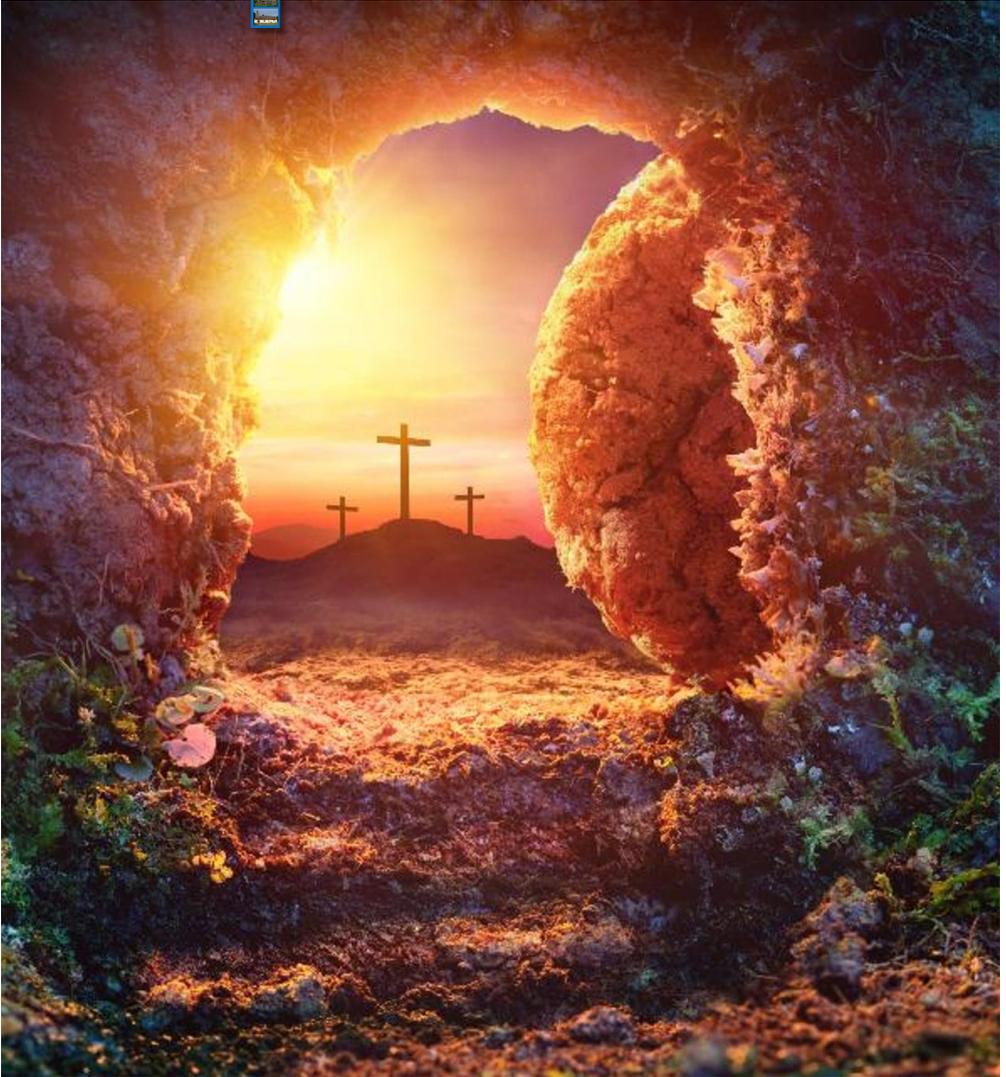




Chet Valley Churches



All Together Communion
Easter Day

4th April 2021

Welcome

The paschal candle is lit in silence. The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen. **He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Praise God for the victory of light over darkness.

Praise God for Christ's victory over death.

The Collect (*Prayer for the Day*)

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hymn *Jesus Christ is Risen Today*

**Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia,
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia,
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia,
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia.**

**Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia,
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia,
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia,
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia.**

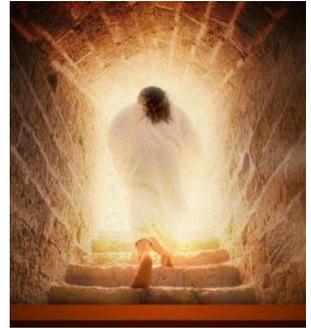
**But the anguish he endured Alleluia,
Our salvation hath procured; Alleluia,
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia,
Where the angels ever sing Alleluia.**

Confession (*We Say Sorry to God*)

In baptism we died with Christ, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, we might walk in newness of life. Let us receive new life in him as we confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Father God, we ask you to forgive us for the things we have thought and the things we have said and the things we have done that do not please you. We are sorry.

Help us to be more like Jesus: ready to pray, ready to help others, ready to do your will in all things, every day. Amen.



Absolution (*The Priest Announces God's Forgiveness*)

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

♪ Hymn Alleluia, Alleluia Give Thanks to the Risen Lord

Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth, he is the King of creation.

Alleluia, alleluia...

Spread the good news o'er all the earth,

Jesus has died and has risen.

Alleluia, alleluia...

Come let us praise the living God, joyfully sing to our Saviour.

Alleluia, alleluia...

📖 Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

For the word of the Lord, **Thanks be to God.**

♪ Gradual Hymn *Lord of the Dance*

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth:
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
They came with me and the dance went on:

Dance, then, wherever you may be...

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame:
The holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me on high,
And they left me there on a cross to die:

Dance, then, wherever you may be...

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;
But I am the dance, and I still go on:

Dance, then, wherever you may be...

They cut me down and I leapt up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die.
I'll live in you if you'll live in me:
I am the Lord of the dance, said he.

Dance, then, wherever you may be...

📖 Gospel: *Mark 16:1-8*

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. **Alleluia.**
He has defeated the powers of death. **Alleluia.**
Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing. **Alleluia.**



He has the words of eternal life. **Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark:

Glory to you O Lord.

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon [Rev Alison]

When I was doing assemblies in school, I often used to ask the children about my favourite book—the Bible. A book of books, but all parts of one big story. And we’re in the middle of one of the most important parts of that story now.

Last week we left Jesus and the disciples in Bethany, presumably with their friends Mary and Martha, having triumphantly entered into Jerusalem earlier in the day. We thought they would take each day as it unfolded; uncertain about Jesus’ predictions of his imminent betrayal, suffering, death’ and resurrection.

Jesus is a man who tells his own story—God’s story, actually—and it is very different from all the old familiar stories. Not just different but both attractive and challenging. We have seen many attracted to the Jesus story and now, as the week has unfolded, we have seen people fall away from it.

The noisy and exuberant crowd that greeted him are no longer heard from for the moment. Judas, one of the twelve, decides he no longer wants to be part of this Jesus story; wants it to be a different story of kingship and

kingdom than the one it is turning out to be. Maybe it is because Jesus reprimanded Judas for criticising the woman who anointed him. And so Judas leaves Jesus to betray him to the Jewish leaders and the temple police. They are not fans of Jesus, and want no part of his story, his teaching, his challenge, or his claims and are looking for a way to get rid of him, though not at the festival.

The other disciples stay with Jesus and prepare for the Passover feast. Perhaps grateful that things seem like some kind of normal for the moment. But they are shaken when Jesus tells them that one of them is going to betray him. Surprised, unsettled probably, when Jesus says the words of the feast in a new and strange way: "Take; this is my body; This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many." Later, in the garden at prayer, it seems that even Jesus is reluctant to be part of his own story, the story of salvation: "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He knows just how cruel and awful his death is to be.

And then it happens: the people who are against Jesus come to arrest him and his disciples desert him and flee. It feels too dangerous for them to remain part of the Jesus story. Even Peter, faithful Peter, denies him three times later that evening when he creeps back to see what is going on.

In front of the Roman governor, Pilate, charges are laid against Jesus. "Are you the King of the Jews?" he is asked. "You say so", is the reply, then Jesus remains silent. The crowd play their part encouraged by the chief priests. Their exuberant participation in his entry into Jerusalem forgotten, they have turned against Jesus noisily shouting that he should be crucified.

And so he is. And as he hangs on the cross, he wonders if God has forsaken him. If, somehow, he has been written out of his own story. It is utter desolation.

It seems that just a few people now remain: Joseph of Arimathea asks for Jesus body in order that he might bury it before sundown; and that first Easter morning, we find three women coming with spices to anoint Jesus' body. They haven't understood what he has said about rising again from the dead and are anxious about how they will move the stone away from the tomb. But they find that the stone is already rolled away and are alarmed at the young man in white sitting there. He knows that they are looking for Jesus and tells them that he is raised and to go and tell Jesus' disciples to go to Galilee, Peter specifically included.

It is now that these women also desert the Jesus story. They flee in terror and amazement saying nothing to anyone as they are afraid. And that is all that Mark has to tell us. What a cliff-hanger! Surely that can't be the end of the story? The hero is dead—maybe—though there are hints that actually he may be alive. If it were a serial on the television, we'd be saying, "Well, that's ripe for another series isn't it?"

Of course, it isn't the end of the story. Our first reading sees Peter boldly preaching that Jesus is Lord of all. It is sometime after Pentecost, 50 days after Easter. The disciples who left the story, deserted Jesus, have come back again, filled with the Holy Spirit and much more confident than before. Peter is telling Cornelius, a God-fearing centurion and a gentile, the Jesus story. Peter speaks powerfully of Jesus being anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism, of his teaching and healing and doing good, of his being hung on a tree to die. Peter is testifying to Jesus being raised again, eating and drinking with them, commanding them to preach forgiveness of sins. It is a compelling story and Cornelius and his household are baptised into it as a result.

That compelling story of Jesus' death and resurrection is the fulcrum in the bigger story starting with the triune God in creation, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and finishing...? Well, it will finish with resurrection and restoration: "Behold I make all things new" {Rev 21:5} But we are part of the story now as it continues to unfold. So where are you in this story?

Have you sometimes felt that it is too challenging to be a part of the Jesus story?

Is it easier just to watch or read the story rather than being a character within it?

Have you sometimes fallen away from Jesus?

Have you sometimes wondered if God is even there?

If you have you are not alone! The way of the cross is not easy.

Do you find you are compelled, nevertheless, to come back to Jesus?

Are you going to live your life doing good and loving others as best you can?

Are you going to tell of Jesus' death and resurrection, and his forgiveness of sins for those that truly believe?

I hope so! Come; come and take your part in the story and say:
Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!



We believe...

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers,
and to all the apostles: this we have received,
and this we believe. Amen.**

Prayers

Today's intercessions are based on phrases from the gospel reading, which I shall quote before the start of each. When I say, 'Risen Christ', please reply, '**lead us to new life.**'

So that they might go and anoint him... We praise you God, our father, for the gift of Jesus: for his birth, his death and resurrection. We pray that what we think, say, and do, follow his example and teaching.

Risen Christ, **lead us to new life.**

Who will roll away the stone... Life can be hard, especially for those without our advantages. We pray that we will have the strength, vision, and endurance to follow Jesus and particularly to support and encourage those who need our help.

Risen Christ, **lead us to new life.**

Do not be alarmed... People's lives can be made very difficult by many things. We pray for those who are badly affected by harmful events, such as those caused by climate change, the unfair sharing of resources, disease, and war or other forms of human violence.

Risen Christ, **lead us to new life.**

Go tell... We pray that Jesus' life, death and resurrection will inspire us to spread his good news amongst our families, friends and workmates. Give us the right words when we need them.

Risen Christ, **lead us to new life.**

He is going ahead of you... We remember those who have died in faith, especially those we knew and loved, thanking you for them and for their example. We pray for those who suffer and for those in caring roles.

Risen Christ, **lead us to new life.**

We make our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. May the Easter light of life, hope and joy live in us each day. **Amen.**

The Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**
Let us share the Easter peace with each other in our hearts.

♪ Offertory Hymn: Jesus is Lord, Creation's Voice Proclaims It

**Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it.
For by his power each tree and flower, was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it.
Sun, moon and stars in heaven, cry, 'Jesus is Lord!'**

***Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!
Praise Him with Hallelujahs for Jesus is Lord!***

**Jesus is Lord! Yet from his throne eternal,
In flesh he came to die in pain, on Calvary's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From him all life proceeding,
Yet gave his life a ransom, thus setting us free.**

**Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror.
From death he rose, and all his foes, shall own his name.
Jesus is Lord! God sent His Holy Spirit
To show by works of power, that Jesus is Lord.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you **and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.



Almighty God, good Father to us all, your face is turned towards your world. In love you gave us Jesus your Son to rescue us from sin and death. Your Word goes out to call us home to the city where angels sing your praise. We join with them in heaven's song:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Father of all, we give you thanks for every gift that comes from heaven. To the darkness Jesus came as your light. With signs of faith and words of hope he touched untouchables with love and washed the guilty clean.

This is his story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

The crowds came out to see your Son, yet at the end they turned on him. On the night he was betrayed he came to table with his friends to celebrate the freedom of your people.

This is his story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Jesus blessed you, Father, for the food; he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: This is my body, given for you all. Jesus then gave thanks for the wine; he took the cup, gave it and said: This is my blood, shed for you all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

This is our story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate the cross on which he died to set us free. Defying death he rose again and is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.

This is our story. **This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.**

Send your Spirit on us now that by these gifts we may feed on Christ with opened eyes and hearts on fire. May we and all who share this food offer ourselves to live for you and be welcomed at your feast in heaven where all creation worships you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The service continues with the Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on Earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Fraction (*Breaking of Bread*)

Jesus says, I am the bread of life, whoever eats this bread will live for ever.
Lord, our hearts hunger for you; give us this bread always.

The Invitation

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Communion

Post Communion Prayer

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Ending

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
**He has given us new life and hope.
He has raised Jesus from the dead.**

God has claimed us as his own.
**He has brought us out of darkness.
He has made us light to the world.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.



♪ **Final Hymn** *Thine be the Glory*

**Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.**

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

**Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting:**

Thine be the glory...

**No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
Life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors through thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above:**

Thine be the glory...

Blessing & Dismissal

May Jesus, who out of defeat brings new hope and a new future,
fill you with his new life;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

He is not here, He is risen.

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

